

# NEWS TODAY

## SC PULLS UP GOVERNMENT FOR NOT FILLING VACANCIES IN TRIBUNALS TIMELY

- Court highlighted the following issues in **the working of the tribunals in the country**.

- **On Appointments** - Appointments in tribunals have been pending for over a year-and-a-half and cases were being adjourned by a year.
- **Unconstitutional Laws** - Court highlighted that **Tribunal Reforms Act of 2021** brought by the government, hosted a replica of provisions **expressly struck down by the Supreme Court in multiple judgments recently**.
  - The 2021 Act abolished nine key tribunals, **raised a threat to judicial independence by giving government wide powers regarding appointments, service conditions, salaries, etc.,** of members of key tribunals.

- **About Tribunals** - It is a **quasi-judicial institution** that is set up to deal with problems such as resolving administrative disputes and reducing the workload of traditional judiciary.

- Tribunals were **not part of original constitution**, they were incorporated on recommendation of **Swaran Singh Committee, by the 42nd Amendment Act, 1976** whereby,

- Article 323-A deals with Administrative Tribunals.
- Article 323-B deals with tribunals for other matters.
- Tribunals are **vested with the powers of Civil Court** in respect of some matters.



### Related News

- Supreme Court asked the government to **constitute the Goods and Services Tax (GST) Appellate Tribunal** which has not been constituted even four years after the central GST law (Section 109) was passed in 2016.

## CENTRE TO RAISE FARMERS DATABASE FROM 5.5 CRORE TO 8 CRORE BY DECEMBER END

- To **link agriculture with digital technology, scientific research and knowledge**, a **National Farmers' Database** has been created by Ministry of Agriculture.

- **The Database will be further expanded from 5.5 crore to 8 crore by December 2021** with help of states and **allow its linkage to state land record data (as done by Karnataka)**.

- The database is being created by taking **data from existing schemes like PM-KISAN, soil health card and PM Fasal Bima Yojana**.

- The database is to **serve as the core of Agri-Stack** which is a **collection of technology-based interventions in agriculture**, using federated farmers database to build innovative agri-focused solutions by leveraging emerging technologies.

- This includes use of **sensors, artificial intelligence, robotics** and external sources like weather information, etc.

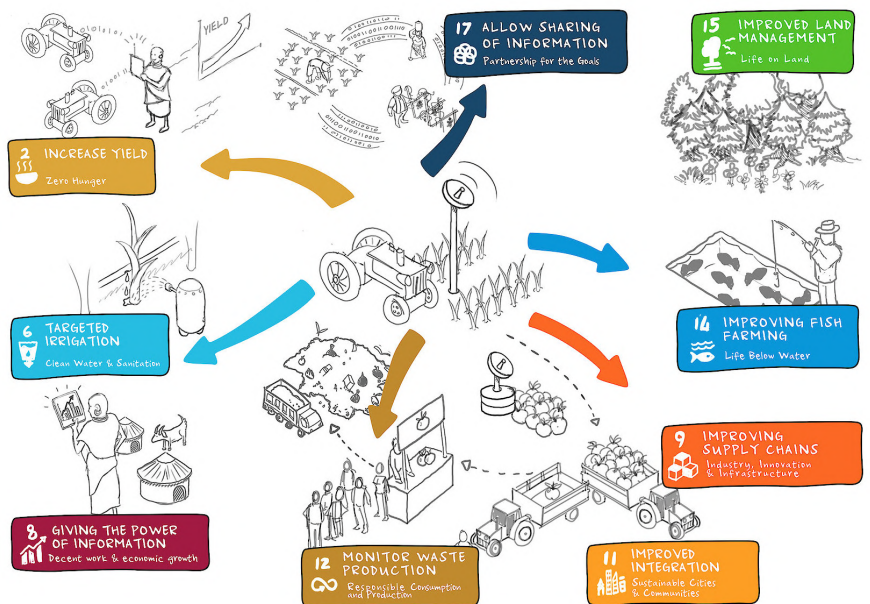
- **Other steps taken towards Digital Agriculture**

- **IndEA Digital Ecosystem of Agriculture (IDEA)**, a **National Digital Agriculture Ecosystem** to increase agricultural efficiency and productivity.

- It includes **National Mission on Digital Agriculture (NMDA)**, multi-stakeholder IDEA Advisory Council to guide NMDA, assigning a **Unique Farmer ID (UFID)** to every farmer etc.

- **National e-governance Plan in Agriculture**.

- **Unified Farmer Service Platform**.



### Related News

- The 2019-20 Periodic Labour Force Survey statistics (mapping upto first 3 months of Covid-19 crisis, i.e. till June 2020) have shown a **trend reversal**
  - » Turnaround in **declining female participation in agriculture** from **18.6% in 2018-19 to 22.8% in 2019-20** (almost equal to 2011-12 level of 22.5%).

# GOVERNMENT PROPOSES NEW CODE OF CONDUCT FOR COMMITTEE OF CREDITORS (COC) UNDER INSOLVENCY AND BANKRUPTCY CODE

- Move comes after a **Parliamentary panel** flagged the “disproportionately large and unsustainable ‘haircuts’ taken by the creditors over the years”.
  - A haircut refers to the **lower-than-market value** placed on an asset being used as collateral for a loan.
  - The Code of conduct for COC would **promote transparent and fair working of CoC** and make them **more accountable to the resolution process** under IBC, 2016.
- A CoC is composed of **financial creditors to the Corporate Debtor (CD)** or **operational creditors** in the absence of unrelated financial creditors.
  - It **approves the Resolution Plan by a vote of 66 %** of the voting shares for the corporate debtor and its **role is vital for a timely and successful resolution for a CD**.
- About IBC, 2016**
  - The bankruptcy code is a **one stop solution for resolving insolvencies**. It aims to **protect the interests of small investors** and make the process of doing business less cumbersome.
  - IBC provides for a **time-bound process for resolving insolvency** in companies and among individuals.
  - The outcome of the code, however, has been a mixed one (refer infographic).

## MIXED OUTCOME

Chart 1: While the IBC was supposed to help turnaround sick businesses, many actually end up getting liquidated.

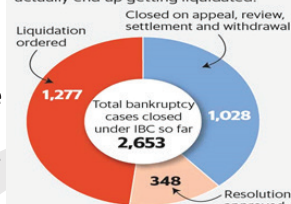


Chart 2: But in value terms, around 70% of the distressed assets have been rescued and only 30% went into liquidation.



\*At the time of commencing bankruptcy proceedings  
Data as of March, 2021  
Source: IBBI

## TAMIL NADU TO SET UP INDIA'S FIRST DUGONG CONSERVATION RESERVE

- Recently, the Tamil Nadu government announced **India's first conservation reserve** for Dugongs in Palk Bay.

- They face threats of **habitat loss, entanglement in fishing nets, hunting for meat and oil etc.**



### About Dugong

- Dugongs, also known as **Sea Cows**, are the only **herbivorous marine mammals** and the only member of the family **Dugongidae**, making it one of the four surviving species in the **Order Sirenia** (other is **Trichechidae**, or the manatee family).
- Classified as **Vulnerable by IUCN** and included in **Schedule I of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972** as well as **Appendix I on CITES**; they are mainly found in **shallow areas** as they survive mainly on seagrass.
- They **live in groups** and come to the **surface to breathe** with a distinct dolphin-like tail, and have mammary glands.
- Lifespan** of dugongs is **70 years or more** and **female dugongs** breed **every 2.5 to 7 years** (starting from **6 to 17 years**) with a gestation period of **13 to 15 months** and a nursing period of around **18 months**.
- Its closest relative, **Steller's Sea cow**, was hunted to extinction in the eighteenth century.

### Conservation Efforts

- MoU on Conservation and Management of Dugongs and their habitats **by UNEP and Conservation of Migratory Species**.
  - India signed it in 2008 and formed a task force for the same.
- Dugong and Sea Grass conservation project by Global Environment Facility** and UNEP for 8 countries in the Indo-Pacific Region **excluding India**.







## MINISTRY OF FISHERIES, ANIMAL HUSBANDRY & DAIRYING CONVENES MEETING TO HIGHLIGHT SPECIAL LIVESTOCK SECTOR PACKAGE

- In the Meeting, convened after a gap of 5 years, the **Special Livestock Sector Package** was **highlighted** which has been **recently announced by Government of India** with an outlay of Rs. 9800 crore leveraging total investment of Rs. 54,618 crore for next 5 years.
  - Also, **Basic Animal Husbandry Statistics-2020** was released which contains **tabulated data sets giving production estimates** for major livestock products like Milk, Eggs, Meat and Wool.
  - Portal for National Livestock Mission (NLM)** was also launched.
    - National Livestock Mission** aims for development of livestock sector to enhance level of nutrition and standard of living of livestock keepers and farmers.
- Other Government schemes to promote the sector**
  - Rashtriya Gokul Mission (RGM)** - Breed improvement activity is supported by it.
  - National Programme for Dairy Development** - Aims to enhance quality of milk and milk products and increase share of organized milk procurement.
  - Dairy Processing & Infrastructure Development Fund** under National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development to provide subsidized loan to capital stressed milk cooperatives.
  - National Animal Disease Control Programme** - To control FMD (Foot & Mouth Disease and Brucellosis) by 2025 with vaccination and its eradication by 2030.

### Key Statistics of Livestock Sector

- The **Gross Value Added in FY2019-20** is **about 28% of the Agricultural Sector** and 5% of total Gross Value Added.
- The sector has seen a **7% growth in FY 2019-20 as compared to FY 2018-19**.

## ALSO IN NEWS

 <p><b>River Bhogdoi</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Due to Coal mining in Nagaland, encroachments and waste discharge from tea estates, the inter-state River Bhogdoi is dying a slow death.</li> <li>• <b>River Bhogdoi</b>, a south bank sub-tributary to <b>Brahmaputra</b>, originates from Mokokchung in North Hills of Nagaland and flows through Jorhat before joining <b>Dhansiri River</b>. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ River Bhogdoi is the <b>most polluted river of Assam</b>.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Other tributaries of Brahmaputra</b>- Lohit, Dibang, Dihang, Manas, etc.</li> </ul>
 <p><b>Seaweed Farming</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recently, the Lakshadweep administration launched <b>seaweed farming</b> units in nine inhabited islands.</li> <li>• <b>Seaweed</b> is a common name for countless marine plants and algae that grows in shallow water of oceans as well rivers, lakes and other water bodies. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Present in different forms like Brown Seaweeds, Red Seaweeds and Green Seaweeds; they provide <b>vital ecosystem services</b> as <b>excellent nutrient scrubbers</b> with high potential in <b>basic utilities</b> like food and industrial uses. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ E.g. <b>pharmaceuticals, cosmetics and nutraceuticals</b></li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>• India has planned to produce <b>11.5 lakh tonnes</b> of seaweed by <b>2025</b> under <b>PM Matsya Sampada Yojana</b>.</li> </ul>
 <p><b>Bhitarkanika National Park (BNP)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>German government agency GIZ</b>, will <b>conserve mangrove and biodiversity of Odisha's Bhitarkanika National Park</b>, India's second-largest mangrove forest. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ It is supported by International Climate Initiative (IKI) of German Federal Ministry for Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety (BMU).</li> <li>➤ Objective of project is to <b>support implementation of livelihood-oriented conservation and restoration activities</b> as well as train community members in alternative sustainable livelihoods.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• BNP, a Ramsar site, is located in <b>estuary of Brahmani, Baitarani, Dhamra, and Mahanadi river</b> systems.</li> </ul>
 <p><b>Pollen Calendar</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Department of Community Medicine and School of Public Health, PGIMER, Chandigarh has developed the <b>first Pollen Calendar for Chandigarh city</b>. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Pollens are considered <b>major outdoor airborne allergens</b> responsible for asthma, atopic dermatitis, etc in humans.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Pollen is a <b>fine yellowish powder</b> that is transported from plant to plant by the wind, by birds, by insects or by other animals. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Pollen calendars can identify potential allergy triggers and provide a clear understanding for clinicians as well as allergy sufferers.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
 <p><b>Manda Buffalo</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recently, the National Bureau of Animal Genetic Resources (NBAGR) recognised the <b>Manda Buffalo</b> as <b>19th unique breed</b> of buffalo in India.</li> <li>• Found in the Eastern Ghats and plateau of Koraput region of Odisha, the Manda buffalo are <b>less prone to diseases</b> with <b>resistance to parasitic infections</b>. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ They are used by people in <b>Koraput, Malkangiri and Nabarangpur districts</b> for ploughing.</li> <li>➤ The new recognition will further help in <b>conservation and development of Manda buffalo</b> for higher productivity from Centre and State Government.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
 <p><b>Device to carry out biological experiments in space</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Indian Institute of Science (IISc)</b> and <b>Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO)</b> have developed a <b>modular, self-contained device to cultivate</b> microorganisms which could enable scientists to carry out biological experiments in space. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Uses <b>LED and photodiode sensor combination to track bacterial growth</b>.</li> <li>➤ <b>Adapted for studying other organisms</b> such as worms, and for non-biological experiments.</li> <li>➤ Provide valuable insight <b>for human space missions such as 'Gaganyaan'</b>.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>





- According to researchers, extra-terrestrial life could thrive on major Hycean exoplanets.
- Hycean planets are up to 2.6 times bigger than Earth, with large oceans and hydrogen rich atmosphere
  - **Hycean planets aren't rocky** like Earth.
  - They appear to be incredibly abundant throughout the Milky Way galaxy.



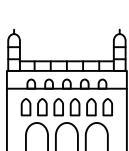
- **Greece**
  - After intense heat waves in Southern Europe and wildfires across region including Greece, it has decided to form a Climate Crisis Ministry.
  - **Location-Greece (Capital: Athens)** lies in the southernmost part of the **Balkan Peninsula** with over 1400 islands and land boundaries with Albania, Macedonia, Bulgaria and Turkey.
  - **Major Water Bodies:** Aegean Sea, Ionian Sea, Sea of Crete, Libyan Sea and Mediterranean Sea are main water bodies, sharing maritime borders with Cyprus, Egypt, Italy and Libya.
- **Singapore**
  - Recently, Singapore started trials of using robots to patrol public areas and aid in ensuring social distancing in parks and gardens.
  - **Location-Singapore (Capital: Singapore)** is a small island nation located off the coast of the southern tip of the Malay Peninsula in Southeast Asia, between the Indian Ocean and South China Sea.
  - **Major Water Bodies:** Lying just 1-degree above the equator, **Strait of Johar** and **Strait of Singapore** are its main water bodies.
    - Its maritime borders have South China Sea in East, Strait of Malacca in West and the Riau islands in South.



Errata- On 2nd Sept 2021, in the Times Higher Education Rankings, the target for GER of 50% was erroneously given as 2030 instead of 2035.



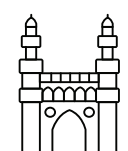
**DELHI**



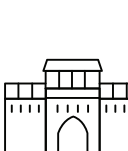
**LUCKNOW**



**JAIPUR**



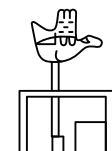
**HYDERABAD**



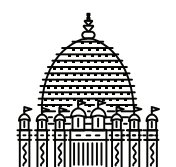
**PUNE**



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